

Soldiers

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Soldiers

October 2010 • VOLUME 65, NO. 10



Soldiers from the Alabama National Guard build and maintain miles of barriers to protect Dauphin Island, Ala., beaches from the oil spill, July 23. At the time of the photo, more than 1,600 National Guard members were supporting Operation Deepwater Horizon in four Gulf states. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill)



[On the Cover]

Pfc. David B. James keeps watch during a patrol halt in the Watapur Valley, Kunar province, Afghanistan, July 23. Afghan National Security Forces and International Security Assistance Forces visited the village of Qatar Kala to inform residents of the upcoming election, and to discuss security in the area. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Gary A. Witte)

[Coming Next Month]

November 2010 - Stories about veterans.



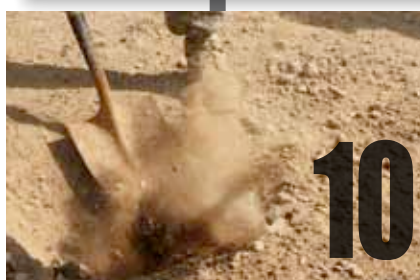
Soldiers participate in a live-fire exercise at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, in February. Troops are exposed to a wide range of sounds in their environments, some of them quite loud. See story on auditory research on page 24. (Photo by Spc. Michael J. MacLeod)

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October 2010

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Soldiers

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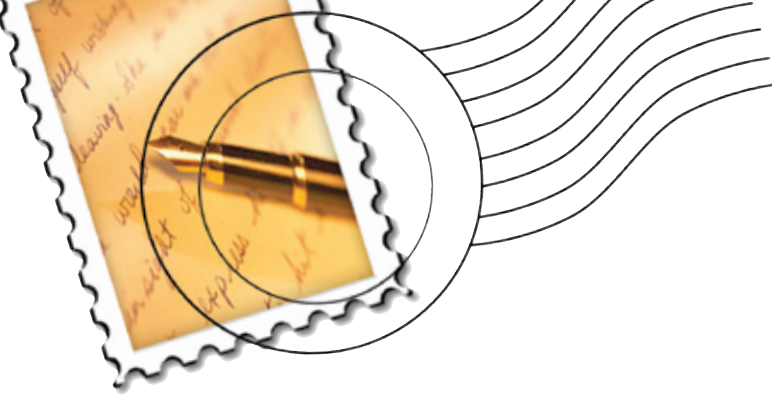


Thomas Jefferson Awards
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MAILCALL

Letters from the field



Editor's note:

WE have received several letters about the poems and artwork published as part of "Wartime Poetry," in the May issue of *Soldiers*.

The poems and artwork, some of which were submitted anonymously, were part of a writing competition hosted by the Fort Wainwright, Alaska, post library; the contest was open to Soldiers and their Families.

Three pieces were chosen to represent different elements of war: expression of creativity while in the field, the pain of missing a loved one, and honoring the memory of fallen friends.

Two submissions in particular have sparked interest among our readers.

The first, the poem "Fallen Soldier," honors the memory of two Soldiers who were killed within days of arriving at Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, in 2008. The piece was written by Sgt. 1st Class Andre Anderson of 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment (attached to the Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, when the poem was written).

The other, a sketch that accompanied the poem "Hold On," has inspired readers from Afghanistan to Italy to Fort Bragg, N.C. The Soldier, who remains anonymous, was serving at FOB Warhorse as well when he wrote the piece and sketched the drawing. The only information attached was a simple statement: "Missing you."

While we don't know his name, the following letters represent just a few examples of the many letters and e-mails we've received about his artwork.

Carrie McLeroy
Editor in chief

May issue

AFTER reading the May 2010 copy of *Soldiers* magazine, I came across the article "Wartime Poetry." Reading these Soldiers' and Family members' personal poetry, and seeing how they eloquently expressed their feelings, brought tears to my eyes, as I remembered my first glimpse of a fallen Soldier.

The sketch that accompanied the poem, "Hold On," was a revelation of my feelings I could not express.

After tours overseas and being in the medical field as a senior medical sergeant major, I have seen many Soldiers fall, and felt what this Soldier felt as he wrote this poem and sketched this particular drawing. He articulated these feelings through his art in a way I could not.



I want to thank this Soldier, because it has opened feelings that were hidden within me about death. This poem has made me realize that I am not the only person feeling or thinking this way.

In appreciation to this anonymous Soldier and in honor of all our fallen Soldiers, I would like the artist's permission to get this beautiful drawing tattooed on my left upper arm. It would be an honor and a privilege. Nothing brings more joy to me, after 24 years of service, than Soldiers. These men and women are why I wake up each morning.

Once again, I hope this Soldier will come forward and give me the honor of immortalizing his drawing.

Sgt. Maj. David Cruz
Division surgeon sergeant major,
First Army Division East

I recently saw the sketch that accompanied the poem "Hold On." I stumbled upon it while in the Reserve Officer Training Corps office and was instantly moved by its emotional depth.

In appreciation for his idea, I drew the sketch in my own interpretation. I have taken no credit for the idea when others have seen my work. I made it very clear that merely the pencil marks were my own, but the real credit belonged to the Soldier responsible for the sketch (featured in the May 2010 issue of *Soldiers*).

I do wish it wasn't anonymously sent, so I could properly acknowledge him for his work. I'm writing this for perhaps no other reason than to show an appreciation for the armed forces and the sacrifices they make.

Sincerely,
Eric Sanders
Merritt Island, Fla.



Soldiers values your opinion

To comment, keep your remarks to under 150 words, include your name, rank and address, and send them to: **Defense Media Activity, Army Production, Attn: Editor, Soldiers Magazine, Box 31, 2511 Jefferson Davis Hwy., Arlington, VA 22202-3900** or e-mail: assignmentdesk@afn.dma.mil



Staff Sgt. John Walding and Maj. Kent Solheim, both Special Forces Soldiers and single-leg amputees, joke after finishing the 113th Boston Marathon on hand bikes. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Curt Squires)



Recovery in his sights:

Amputee graduates from Special Forces Sniper Course

Story by Caroline Goins

JOHN Wayne has toured Afghanistan and Iraq, hunted grizzly bears in Alaska and earned the Silver Star; and as of July, he is the first one-legged Soldier to graduate the Special Forces Sniper Course.

Staff Sgt. John Wayne Walding of Groesbeck, Texas, that is.

In April 2008, Walding and nine other Special Forces Soldiers from a 3rd Special Forces Group assault team were attacked by the Hezbe Islami al Gulbadin while searching for insurgents in Afghanistan's Shok Valley.

Over the six-and-a-half-hour fire-fight, more than 150 insurgents were killed. The members of the assault team were each awarded the Silver Star in December 2008 for their courageous actions.

Walding, one of several team members injured, took a bullet through his right leg under his knee.

"I ripped off my boot lace and literally tied my leg to my thigh to keep it from flapping around," he said.

After his injury, Walding knew he wasn't going to give up and leave the Army. He also didn't want to spend the rest of his career behind a desk.

"You don't become a Green Beret because you 'kind of like it,' you become a Green Beret because you love it, and can't imagine being anything else," he said.

While recuperating, Walding worked as an assistant instructor at 3rd SFG's sniper detachment at Fort Bragg, N.C., where he refused to lower his personal standards because of his injury. But in order to become a full-time instructor, he had to complete the Special Forces Sniper Course at the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School.

During the course, many of Walding's classmates didn't even know about

his injury and prosthetic leg. Walding said he enjoyed his fellow Soldiers' reactions after they learned about his missing leg.

"At first, (my classmates) were shocked to realize I was missing a leg," Walding said. "Then, they realized 'Wow, he's doing everything I'm doing!'"

The seven-week Special Forces Sniper Course teaches sniper marksmanship, semiautomatic shooting, ballistics theory and tactical movement. Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Owens, an SFSC instructor in 2nd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group, emphasized the importance of these skills, and said it takes Soldiers like Walding to push themselves to the limits.

"Snipers have become more dynamic over the past 10 years," Owens said. "Considering current operations overseas, snipers have never been more prevalent, because of the need for distance shooting in rugged terrain."

Walding loves everything about training to be a sniper, particularly the mission and the weapons. He even enjoyed training during the hottest June ever recorded in North Carolina.

"The skill of a Special Forces sniper is unparalleled," Walding said. "This is the most prestigious sniper school in the world. That means something."

"There was never a doubt that Walding would do well in this course," Owens said. "He is extremely motivated, and that never dropped during the course. He never asked for special treatment; he did the same training as everyone else, and scored well in all the exercises."

That never-quit, Soldier-first attitude is what started him back on the path to Special Forces following the battle in Shok Valley.

During his initial recovery at



Staff Sgt. John W. Walding, seen here receiving the Silver Star for his actions in Afghanistan, is a Special Forces sniper instructor and the first amputee to graduate from the Special Forces Sniper Course. (Photo by David Chace)

Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, Walding set short-term goals for himself. He was a runner before the incident, averaging 50 miles per week. During recovery, he would get up and run a little more every day, always keeping his focus on that next step.

Walding is using the same process to work his way back to an operational role. As a Soldier, his first step was to finish the sniper course; the next step is acting as an instructor for his fellow Soldiers. He's hoping to work his way back to a place on an operational Special Forces detachment.

"I'm John Wayne, born on the Fourth of July. This is what I was meant to do," Walding said. ♦



Caroline Goins writes for the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School Public Affairs Office, Fort Bragg, N.C.

Editor's note: To read about the battle in Shok Valley visit www.army.mil/soldiers/archives, and click on the May 2009 issue.

Human Terrain Teams:

Mapping a course for a peaceful, prosperous Iraq

Story and photos by Pfc. Jennifer Spradlin

THE role of U.S. Forces in Iraq continued to evolve with the launch of Operation New Dawn in September, and the majority of efforts now focus on the responsible transfer of authority to Iraqi security forces.

The Human Terrain Team, a specially trained group of Soldiers and civilians with expertise in cultural awareness, plays a pivotal role in helping both the U.S. and Iraqi governments realize their goals for a stable and prosperous Iraq.

Soldiers of 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment rotated through the U.S.

Army National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., in late May to prepare for a fall deployment to Iraq. Joined by HTT members, they trained in simulated towns and provinces with Arabic-speaking actors.

HTT personnel interview local populations in their natural environments and create a better system of communication between the U.S. military, Iraqi civilians, and local, provincial, and national governments.

"The goal of the human terrain team is to provide knowledge of the local population and their way of life to the U.S. military commanders," said

Col. Edward Vaughn, who has served more than 32 years in the active Army, National Guard and Army Reserve. Vaughn volunteered to be a part of an HTT.

"(We are there) to help them better understand the people and make better decisions," he said, explaining that there have been misunderstandings in the past, when accomplishing combat missions were the priority.

"For a long time, we followed the principle that the shortest distance between two points was a straight line, but now we need to stop and get to the know people and develop that bond,



Sgt. Jeffrey Alexander

(Inset) Col. Edward Vaughn, team leader of an Army Human Terrain Team, interacts with the police chief of Abar Layla, a simulated village at the U.S. Army National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif. Vaughn is further developing his interview and rapport-building skills.

that trust,” said Vaughn.

At press time, there were already about 15 HTTs operating in Iraq. Once in country, HTT members work with provincial reconstruction teams, civil affairs and large command groups to help facilitate an effective transition.

“The people of Iraq have been through decades of turmoil and are in need of assistance,” said Dr. James Forsythe, a social scientist with the HTT training at the NTC. “They’re building their own country back, and we want to help them in any way possible.”

Forsythe, who has a doctorate in medical anthropology and served in the Navy Reserve, became interested in the Army’s HTT project because of a desire to make a positive and lasting impression in Iraq. He said the key to success lies in the development of cultural awareness.

“The role of the command group is increasingly focused on facilitating a

transition,” said Forsythe. “HTT has the ability, to coin an African proverb, ‘to find a path to a clearing.’ We are helping to build that path to that clearing and the clearing is an open space where Iraq can flourish.”

This is especially true as the Army continues to adapt its doctrines and methods to achieve victory, using counterinsurgency techniques that were not part of the traditional, large-scale battles of previous wars.

“It’s not a force-on-force battlefield anymore,” said Col. Christie Nixon, a former Reserve brigade commander and current HTT member. “It’s a people battlefield.”


Nixon, a firefighter with more than 27 years of service, said the HTT is one of the most exciting Army initiatives in years and she volunteered to become part of it.

“The types of activities that the Army is going to be involved in for the short- and long-term future are culturally oriented, and we have to consider the people that we are going to impact,” said Nixon. “The Army carries the standard of the United States all across the world.”

Forsythe added that if the HTTs are used properly, they could help prevent future conflicts and diminish local unrest before it manifests into violence.

“HTT is the Army’s light touch with a heavy impact,” said Forsythe. ♦

Pfc. Jennifer Spradlin is assigned to the 16th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Fort Bliss, Texas.



(Inset) Dr. James Forsythe, a social scientist with an Army Human Terrain Team, interviews an “Iraqi civilian” in the simulated village of Abar Layla, at the U.S. Army National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif.

U.S. Soldiers and flight medics with the Afghan National Army Air Corps, transport a patient from an Mi-17 helicopter to an ambulance for transport to the hospital at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan, May 12, 2010.

Trauma care

Trauma hospital in Afghanistan provides state-of-the-art medical service

Story by Sgt. Brent Powell

“ATTENTION on the FOB. Attention on the FOB,” frequently blares from an array of speakers and echoes across Forward Operating Base Salerno. The announcement is usually followed by code words describing the number of patients inbound on a medical evacuation flight.

Most people on Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan, continue their business unaffected, but for the medical staff of the Salerno Hospital the code words mean two things: mass casualties are coming in, and it's about to get very busy.

In one 38-day period during the summer, the staff responded to 39 trauma events and admitted 47 patients. They took nearly 600 X-rays, performed 57 surgeries, conducted 259 CT scans and treated 56 battle-related injuries.

“This is a trauma hospital,” said Lt. Col. Gregory A. Kolb, commanding of-

ficer, 344th Combat Support Hospital. “It's not a typical hospital like we have in the U.S. Most of our patients are trauma patients.”

About 90 percent of patients treated at the hospital are battle casualties who arrive by medevac helicopter. “Most of the injuries we see here are from improvised explosive devices, shrapnel and gunshot wounds,” said Kolb.

Salerno Hospital is equipped to provide top-notch care to its patients. It has its own labs, CT scan equipment, radiology section, operating room, pharmacy and more.

“This hospital is completely on par with hospitals in the U.S.,” said Lt. Col. Paul J. Schenarts, a trauma surgeon and deputy commander of clinical services, 344th CSH. “We don't lack anything. We are able to get diagnostic results back very quickly here, usually within a matter of minutes. That doesn't happen in the States.”

In addition to state-of-the-art equipment and technology, the hospital also has some of the most highly

trained staff available.

“Our staff here is very professional and very compassionate,” said Kolb. “But, in a trauma hospital, it all boils down to the quality of the surgeons, and, without a doubt, I have the best surgeons out there.”

One of those surgeons is Schenarts, a reservist who brings a wealth of knowledge and medical expertise with him. He is a professor of surgery and critical care, as well as the assistant dean for clinical academic affairs, at East Carolina University in Greenville, N.C.

“To work here, you need your funny bone, your back bone and your brain bone,” he said. “I feel like it's not only my duty, but an honor for me to be able to do this. Being able to provide critical care to Soldiers is really wonderful.”

Although their main focus is saving Soldiers' lives, the hospital also treats contractors, coalition forces, detainees, Afghan National Security Forces and local nationals on a case-by-case basis.



Sgt. Brent Powell

Lt. Col. Paul Phillips, an orthopedic surgeon at Forward Operating Base Salerno, performs surgery on a 14-year-old Afghan who has a gunshot wound to his arm.

They recently treated several civilians who had been the targets of an insurgent ambush and massacre that claimed 12 lives. One of the survivors was very happy to be treated by the hospital staff.

"I thank the ISAF forces so much," said Gula Gha, a 28-year-old from Parachinar District, Pakistan. "If it was not for their help, I would have died. I had lost a lot of blood, but the American doctors saved my life. I will never forget them."

With the combination of both the latest technology and highly skilled medical staff, Soldiers can rest assured knowing that should they ever find themselves at FOB Salerno, they will receive the best care possible.

"We provide excellent, quality care, and we treat the best patients in the world...the Soldiers," Schenarts said. ♦

Sgt. Brent Powell is assigned to 3rd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division Public Affairs



Sgt. Brent Powell

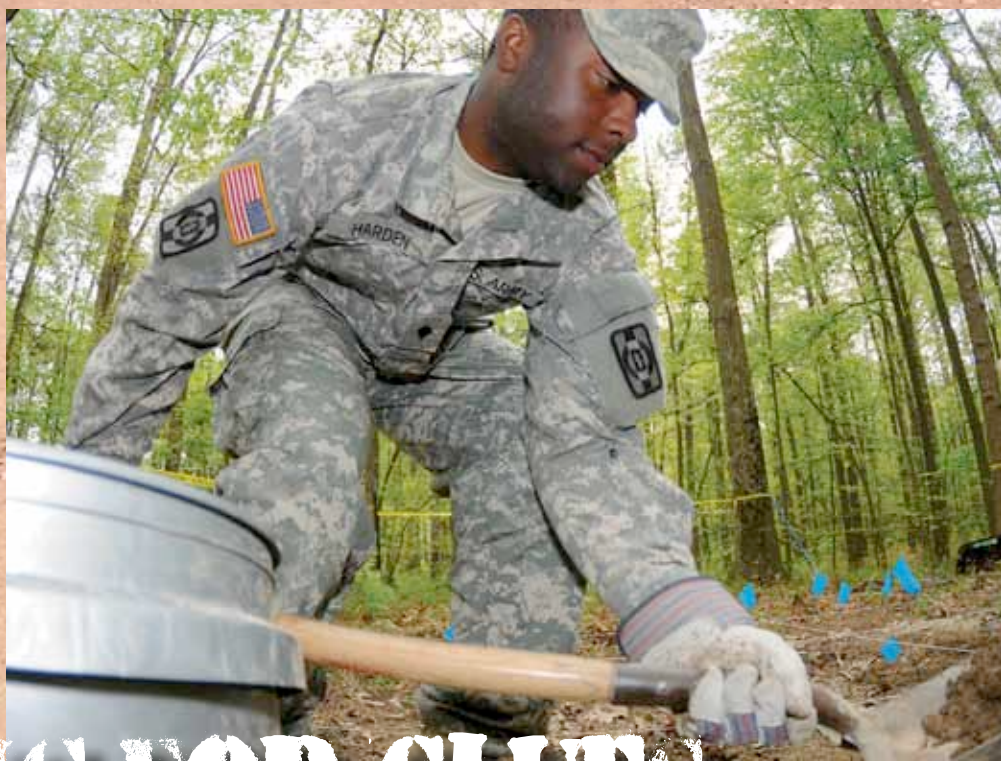
Staff Sgt. Judi Reeves, a surgical technician at Forward Operating Base Salerno, folds cloth over a vascular surgical tray of medical instruments before placing it into a sterilizing machine.



Sgt. Brent Powell

Sgt. Jeffrey Harvin, a surgical technician at Forward Operating Base Salerno, prepares surgical instruments for the doctors.

Spc. Earl Harden gently shovels dirt from a site thought to hold remains during the Unidentified Human Remains Seminar, which took place at Fort Lee, Va., in April. The exercise—also depicted on the opposite page—was designed to familiarize mortuary affairs personnel with procedures used in finding buried human remains.



DIGGING FOR CLUES

Mortuary Affairs meets forensic science

Story and photos by T. Anthony Bell

THEY were barely visible to the personnel on site, but recognizable enough to warrant proceeding with meticulous caution.

"You'll have to dig around it gently," warned the man in charge. "You don't want to disturb anything else that could be buried beside it."

The crew of six had just discovered what resembled human skeletal remains, buried in a makeshift grave just off a dirt road in a wooded area.

"The abductor has said he buried the remains here," said Marine Staff Sgt. Brian Smith, the team's leader, "so we sent out a search and recovery team."

The skeletal remains are not real, and the search and recovery team isn't a crack forensic unit like the ones seen on TV's "CSI." They are mortuary affairs Soldiers and Marines acting as crime scene investigators and technicians in a unique training opportunity

dubbed the Unidentified Human Remains Seminar.

"This seminar is designed to give participants the opportunity to learn how to locate clandestine graves, how to identify them, how to map it out and how to proceed in excavating it, all the while maintaining forensic evidence," said Dr. Lisa Leppo, a forensic anthropologist assigned to the Joint Mortuary Affairs Center at Fort Lee, Va.

The seminar, held at Fort Lee's Mortuary Affairs Training Area, lasted four days. It included about 30 Soldiers from the 49th Quartermaster Group's 111th and 54th Quartermaster companies located at Fort Lee, Reserve Soldiers from the 311th and 246th Quartermaster companies in Puerto Rico, and Marines from various locations.

The Virginia Institute of Forensic Science and Medicine in Richmond collaborated with the JMAC for the seminar, providing a number of nationally known experts to support the instruction.

Leppo, also JMAC's chief of train-

ing, said the first-of-its-kind training centered on crime scenes and buried remains, which mortuary affairs professionals aren't normally trained to handle.

"They get search and recovery exercises (in advanced individual training), which historically does not include locating clandestine graves," she said, noting that military mortuary affairs personnel normally work with remains found above ground.

"Military personnel typically go out when there's a major incident, like an airplane or helicopter crash. This is kind of preparing them to handle evidence in a medical-legal arena. The Armed Forces medical examiner has declared every battlefield casualty a forensic investigation—so we're trying to give them hands-on training to preserve evidence, understand what forensics is all about and how...it plays into an identification for the medical examiner."

Training participants were separated into four teams and pro-



(Top) Spc. John Hall studies a mock bone fragment after it was unearthed at a clandestine gravesite during the seminar.

(Lower left) Dr. Lisa Leppo, chief of training, Joint Mortuary Affairs Center, demonstrates to Spc. Earl Harden how to proceed when remains are found in a clandestine burial.

(Lower right) Spc. John Hall uses a sifter to separate remains from natural debris during the seminar.



growth and insect inhabitation.

"We can use entomology to tell investigators how long an individual has been dead, and we can use botany to tell how long an individual has been in the grave site itself," Byrd said.

Participants also learned about medical evidence, odontology (the proper handling, examination and evaluation of dental evidence), creating biological profiles from anthropological evidence and canine search and recovery.

The skills servicemembers learned during the seminar will benefit them as they progress through the ranks—when they're more likely to be assigned to the Joint Prisoners of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command in Hawaii. The JPAC's mission is to recover the remains of missing Americans from past conflicts.

"Usually, when they become non-commissioned officers they get the option to volunteer for JPAC," said Staff Sgt. Matthew Biggs, a JMAC instructor. "They search for buried remains all over the world—Cambodia, Europe, China, even in North Korea—so the training will help."

In the meantime, the training the mortuary affairs Soldiers and Marines have received could be useful if civilian law enforcement should need assistance.

"Our hope is to get out to the law enforcement community that we have mortuary affairs personnel who are trained in this, and they could be able to assist (them)," she said. "They won't have jurisdiction, but they would be an invaluable asset to law enforcement who need a little help." ♦

vided various scenarios relating to the whereabouts of victims. They were responsible for locating the area, properly marking it, making observations, recording terrain features and other surroundings, and undertaking the painstaking process of excavating remains and gathering evidence.

The 54th's Spc. Earl Harden said the exercise was not only a refresher, it also opened up another side of mortuary affairs.

"We learned how to specify the area that we need to excavate, something

that we were taught but never put into use," Harden said. "When we're down-range, we do the job that we train for and are familiar with. We don't practice this, so it's actually a privilege to come out here and put these skills to use."

Burial indicators relating to entomology and botany are skills mortuary affairs personnel couldn't hope to obtain in regular training, but they received a class on the subjects from Dr. Jason Byrd, a VIFSM-affiliated forensic entomologist. Byrd taught Soldiers how to make observations with respect to plant

T. Anthony Bell works at the Fort Lee Public Affairs Office



Left behind:

Family faces new,
painful reality

Story by Laura M. Levering

THE news came loud, but unclear. Erica Paci was awakened by vigorous knocking at her front door. Her heart pounding, she jumped out of bed and ran to see who was there. It was two servicemembers, and a military spouse's worst nightmare suddenly became Paci's reality.

"I fell to my knees and was just begging Jesus for it not to be true...And then I quickly snapped out of it, because I have three babies to take care of."

Paci learned that her husband, Sgt. Anthony "Tony" Paci, was killed in Afghanistan, March 4, when the Stryker he was riding in swerved to miss an oncoming vehicle and rolled over. He was a member of 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, 5th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division out of Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

Paci had spoken to her husband just hours before. In his usual manner, he blew a kiss and assured her he would call again in the morning. She never could have imagined it would be the last time she would hear his voice.

"I can honestly say I believed that he was coming home," Paci said. "People even promised me. They told me I had no reason to worry."

Since Tony's death, Paci has been pouring herself into keep-

(Left) Erica Paci wears a necklace made of her husband's wedding ring, the 5th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division coin and a cross that he purchased in Afghanistan and gave her at Christmas, just months before his death. (All photos in this article courtesy of Ingrid Barrentine)

(Right) Paci holds a photo of her husband, Sgt. Anthony "Tony" Paci.



ing Tony's memory alive while trying to maintain a positive outlook. One of her top priorities is to teach their children about their father and ensure he continues to be a part of their lives. Judah, her eldest, is 3, hardly old enough to understand death. Paci said she is preserving all of Tony's belongings for Judah and her daughters to see when they're older.

She also plans to take them to Arlington National Cemetery, where their father is buried, several times a year.

"I want them always to be familiar with their dad as a hero," Paci said. "I don't ever want that to be something we shy away from because it's painful."

Paci's hardly one to run from pain and fear, and she faces both head on in a variety of ways. Participating weekly in remembrance runs and learning how to ride a motorcycle are two of them.

"For me, (running) is a positive way of honoring him while taking care of me by working out my anxiety," she said.

As for learning to ride a motorcycle, Paci said it's a goal she plans to accomplish once she can focus more clearly. She purchased a bike for Tony just two weeks before his death.

"He was really looking forward to me riding on that bike with him," she said. "I need to do what we were going to do when he got back for him, but I also need to put it off a little bit before I take on such a potentially dangerous thing."

Paci's most difficult goal was attending what would have been Tony's redeployment ceremony. She could have avoided it, but instead chose to confront it...the undeniable certainty that while hundreds welcomed their loved ones home, she would be leaving without hers.

"I hadn't cried that hard since receiving him at Dover, and even then, I was in so much shock that it paled slightly in comparison to this raw and horrific reality," Paci said.

"I sat in front with another widow from the battalion, and I waited until the room cleared... I had actually looked for him among the Soldiers, as some part of my mind simply refused to believe that this was happening to me.

"Once it became clear and quiet, I was able to walk away. Almost instantly, I felt the load on my shoulders lighten. I had faced it—my worst nightmare. I had stared it down and confronted the painful reality. Somehow, as I knew it would, it had given me a bit of peace and a lot of strength."

Paci hoped that amidst her grief she could be a ray of light to redeploying Soldiers, many of whom are also grieving.

"A lot of these guys hadn't even



Judah Paci, right, holds his “Daddy doll” as his sister, Tallulah, plays in their new Steilacoom, Wash., home. Their mother, Erica, is keeping their late father’s memory alive for them.

really dealt with this yet, but they will, so I’m almost a step ahead of them,” she said of Tony’s fellow Soldiers. “I wanted to make sure that none of them had a heavy heart worrying about me, because I’m going to be OK....We will all be OK eventually.”

Although Paci would never have wished for a life without Tony, she is thankful for ongoing support from the Army, friends and strangers alike—so much so that she decided to buy a house and settle nearby. Though she came from New Jersey and Tony, Maryland, Paci said their adopted state of Washington was the source of her happiest family memories. She plans to remain in the Pacific Northwest.

“I’m so lucky to have the Army and all these caring organizations and wonderful strangers sending my children beautiful things to remember their dad,” Paci said. “The support has been

amazing, beautiful...really touching.

“It feels like home now,” she said of Washington. “I don’t want to go backwards, I want to stay here and go forward.”

A new home is one of many “gifts” Tony has given Paci. Aside from love, the greatest, she said, was Tony’s ability to teach her to have a “glass half-full” attitude.

“Whenever I’d be down in the dumps or complaining about something, he’d say, ‘Erica, it could always be worse....’ I never realized how profound that was until now.”

Paci hopes others will hear her story and strive to live each day as if it was their last, as she and Tony did.

“We told each other every opportunity we had that we loved each other,” she said. “I have three and a half years of beautiful memories that have made me a better person and

made my heart more full.”

Striving to keep her composure through tears, Paci said each day remains a challenge. The hardest time of day comes at night when the kids are asleep and she feels most alone.

“I just keep clinging to God, and my comforting thought is, ‘There’s nothing I could have done to stop this,’” she said. “None of this was in my power, and he is in heaven now.”

At the end of the day, she still manages to see the glass as half full:

“I’m so thankful that if I had to go through something this awful in my life, that it could’ve been in this capacity where my husband is (regarded as) a hero.” ♦

Laura M. Levering is a reporter with Joint Base Lewis-McChord’s weekly newspaper, the Northwest Guardian.

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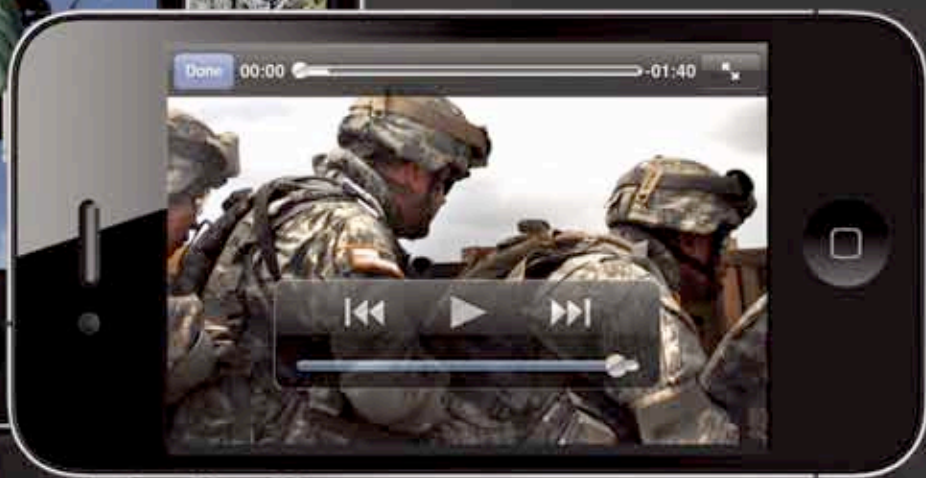
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'Apps for Army' to help shape future of acquisition process

KNOWLEDGE gained from the recent "Apps for the Army" application-development challenge may help the service develop and acquire software applications more quickly.

The challenge was testing a rapid-acquisition process for software applications—similar to developing applications for the iPhone and Android cellular phones, said Lt. Gen. Jeffrey A. Sorenson, the Army's chief information officer/G-6.

The Army asked developers to submit software applications for mobile phones to assist mission requirements; 140 individuals or teams submitted 53.

Sorenson said the challenge foreshadows getting applications into the Army faster.

Today, the process to develop applications for Army use is time-consuming and difficult, he said. The acquisition process piloted during Apps for the Army showed that applications can be developed and delivered in 90 days.

Major Gregory Motes and Capt. Christopher Braunstein and Stacey Osborn of the Army Signal Center at



During the "LandWarNet" conference, in Tampa, Fla., Lt. Gen. Jeffrey A. Sorenson, the Army's chief information officer and G-6, said building out the network and acquiring new applications faster is critical to the Army's future. (Photo by C. Todd Lopez)

Fort Gordon, Ga., worked as a team to develop applications. Their "Physical Training Program" for the iPhone won first place in the training category.

The application was designed to help Soldiers develop a PT program based on the Army's new physical readiness training. The app uses still images and video to demonstrate how to perform exercises.

"We saw this as a new way that maybe training manuals could be in the future," Motes said. "Some people, we know, learn better by reading words and

looking at pictures, and some people appreciate the videos."

The other first-place winners, who each won \$3,000, were:

- The Telehealth Mood Tracker application, developed for the Android by Robert Kayl, Scott Swim and Robert Van Gorkom of the National Center for Telehealth and Technology, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

- The Disaster Relief application, developed by Andrew Jenkins and Alex Ly of the Engineer Research and Development Center, Alexandria, Va.

- The Movement Projection application, developed by Luke Catania of the Engineer Research and Development Center, Alexandria, Va.

- The New Recruit application, developed by Thomas Maroulis of Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center, Picatinny Arsenal, N.J. The app provides info to potential recruits, to include military rank and insignia, Army news feeds, an Army physical fitness test calculator, and a body mass index calculator. ♦

— C. Todd Lopez/ARNEWS

'Stop-Loss' Deadline nears

THE deadline to apply for a stipend under Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay is Oct. 21.

Soldiers may be eligible for a stipend of \$500 for each month served in stop-loss status between Sept. 11, 2001 and Sept. 30, 2009. About 145,000 servicemembers are eligible for this benefit, according to DOD officials.

Major Roy Whitley, the Army's project manager for RSLSP, said the Army had processed about 44,000 claims by the end of July. But, he said he feels more troops are out there who don't know to apply.

Whitley said that as long as the application is filed by Oct. 21, the claim can be reviewed and processed later. The Stop-Loss website has the application at: http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2010/0710_stoploss/ ♦

—Ian Graham/Defense Media Activity-Emerging Media

DOD adjusts fees for child care

FEES for children enrolled in Department of Defense child development centers and school-age care programs were adjusted in September.

The DOD broadened fee ranges from six to nine categories, raised the income cap on each fee range, and established the top earning range at \$125,000 a year and above for what officials believe will be a more equitable policy.

Previously, Families earning more than \$70,000 a year and above all paid the same fee for child care. Under the new policy, Families will see either a small decrease or increase in their fees depending on their total family income.

Families earning \$85,000 and below will experience relatively minimal changes, officials said.

For more specifics about fees at a particular installation, parents are encouraged to contact their local child development center. ♦

— Department of Defense



A child plays with a dinosaur at the Rodriguez Child Development Center, Fort Bragg, N.C. (Photo by Sharilyn Wells)

Studies debunk 'sports myth' of running shoes

SOLDIERS who want to minimize their chance of injury while running should choose a shoe based on foot shape, right?

Wrong.

Results of three military studies showed that prescribing shoes based on foot shape made no difference in the injury rates of Army, Marine and Air Force basic trainees, who spend quite a bit of time running.

"We found no scientific basis for choosing running shoes based on foot type," said Dr. Bruce Jones, injury prevention program manager at U.S. Army Public Health Command (Provisional), Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. "Our findings have surprised not just military decision-makers—many of whom run to stay fit—but runners in general."

Popular running and sports medicine literature recommends that people with high arches should choose cushioning shoes, those with normal arches should choose stability shoes, and those with flat feet should choose motion-control shoes, Jones explained.

The literature says that such shoes will compensate for the way these foot types strike the ground during running, and lessen injuries to the legs and feet.

"This seemed to many of us to make sense," said Jones, a long-distance runner for many years. "But when we looked at it in multiple, scientific studies, it turned out to be a sports myth."

Jones and his colleagues were asked by the Department of Defense to test whether basic trainees suffered fewer injuries if shoes were matched to foot type in the way the literature suggested.

Overall, the Health Command's injury experts—led by Dr. Joseph Knapik—looked at more than 9,000 pairs of feet, manually measuring arch height as well as taking foot imprints. In the most recent study of Marine recruits, 1,400 men and women were divided into two groups at random, with one group receiving shoes matched to their foot types and the other group,



Results of three military studies showed that prescribing shoes based on foot shape made no difference in the rate at which injuries occurred in Army, Marine and Air Force basic trainees. (Photo by C. Todd Lopez)

the control group, receiving stability shoes.

Like their Army and Air Force counterparts from two previous studies, the recruits with shoes prescribed according to foot type experienced the same rate of injuries as those in the control group, regardless of other factors, such as age, sex, race and smoking habits. ♦

— Lyn Kukral/U.S. Army Public Health Command (Provisional)

Army releases report on suicide high-risk behaviors

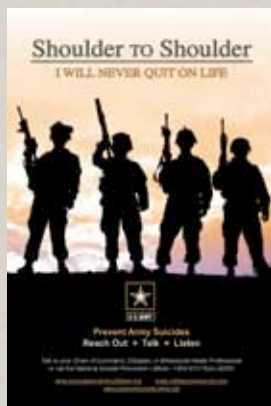
TO curb suicides in the Army, commanders must pay more attention to junior Soldiers and to those who exhibit high-risk behavior, such as drug use or driving under the influence.

This was one recommendation of the Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, Suicide Prevention report, released by the Army's Suicide Prevention Task Force after 15 months of study.

Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Peter Chiarelli discussed the report's findings and noted 60 percent of suicides were among first-term Soldiers.

"The most dangerous year to be a Soldier is your first year," Chiarelli said.

The general said leadership should be focusing more on sponsorship programs for young Soldiers coming into a unit from initial-entry training.



Another of the more than 250 recommendations in the report involves the use of prescription drugs. Open-ended or "as needed" prescriptions leave room for abuse, according to the report. It recommends limiting prescription durations.

Another recommendation is that commanders should be more disci-

plined in ensuring completion of DA Form 4833 requirements, Chiarelli said. That form, the Commander's Report of Disciplinary or Administrative Action, helps the Army keep track of a Soldier's high-risk behavior throughout his career, ensuring commanders at a new unit have visibility of a Soldier's past behavior.

Per the report, 36 percent (78,410) of these forms were not completed over the last six years.

"Those are the kinds of things we have to get back to doing in the force today," Chiarelli said.

Other key findings include:

- Gaps exist in current policies to mitigate high-risk behaviors.
- Lapses occur in surveillance and detection of high-risk behavior.
- The Army use of prescription antidepressants, amphetamines and narcotics is on the rise. ♦

— C. Todd Lopez/ARNEWS



Finding hope:

Casualty assistance officers help grieving Families

Story by Laura M. Levering

THE Army has come a long way from the days when Families of servicemembers killed on active duty were greeted with telegrams coldly notifying them of their loss.

Today, the Army sends trained notification teams, followed rapidly by casualty assistance officers, to guide Families through decision-making and completion of the necessary paperwork to receive their benefits.

"The key reason we're here is to ensure they get what they're entitled to," said Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Otis, a casualty assistance officer assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 5th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

(Left) Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Otis, a casualty assistance officer, helps Judah Paci put on his sandal as his mother, Erica, looks on at her Steilacoom, Wash., home. Erica's husband, Sgt. Anthony "Tony" Paci, was killed in Afghanistan in March.

(Right) Paci holds her youngest daughter, Mila, as she watches Judah, left, and Tallulah play in their new Steilacoom home.

Photos courtesy of Ingrid Barrentine



Otis is currently Erica Paci's CAO. The two met March 4, shortly after Paci learned of her husband's death.

To dispel confusion between a notification team and CAO, Otis explained that although the two work together for a brief time, they are separate.

Notification teams, he said, are composed of two people (holding minimum ranks of sergeant first class, chief warrant officer 2 or captain), and must be of equal or higher rank than the deceased; in addition, the team always includes a chaplain. It is the notification team's responsibility to break the news in person to the next of kin. The Family's CAO then makes initial contact within three hours of notification.

"They go out, do the notification, come back to the casualty assistance office, then I read their briefing sheet and get any heads up on issues that we might already be facing I need to be aware of," Otis said.

After contacting the Family, the CAO arranges to meet them as soon as possible to help ensure their benefits kick in. Some of those entitlements,

such as a \$100,000 death gratuity, are automatic. Others must be initiated and require paperwork. While understanding and explaining benefits are large parts of the CAO's responsibilities, his duties don't end there.

Among the first things he assists with are funeral arrangements. From being present for the dignified transfer of remains to helping plan the funeral and burial, CAOs are available to grieving Families for all administrative matters regarding their deceased loved ones. Most rely heavily on them for guidance.

"They're the ones who ultimately decide on what they want to do, but we want to give them the best advice we can," Otis said.

While there is no set duration of time for CAOs to remain with Families, Otis said six months is average. Entering his fourth month with Paci, Otis said the majority of benefits are in place, but they're still waiting on a few pieces of paperwork. Otis will continue to serve as her CAO until those pieces arrive and the loose ends are tied up.

A final after-action review provides

closure and signals the conclusion of their time together. At its end, the Army solicits feedback for continuous improvements based on input from Families. If an early AAR was to be conducted, Paci would likely give positive feedback.

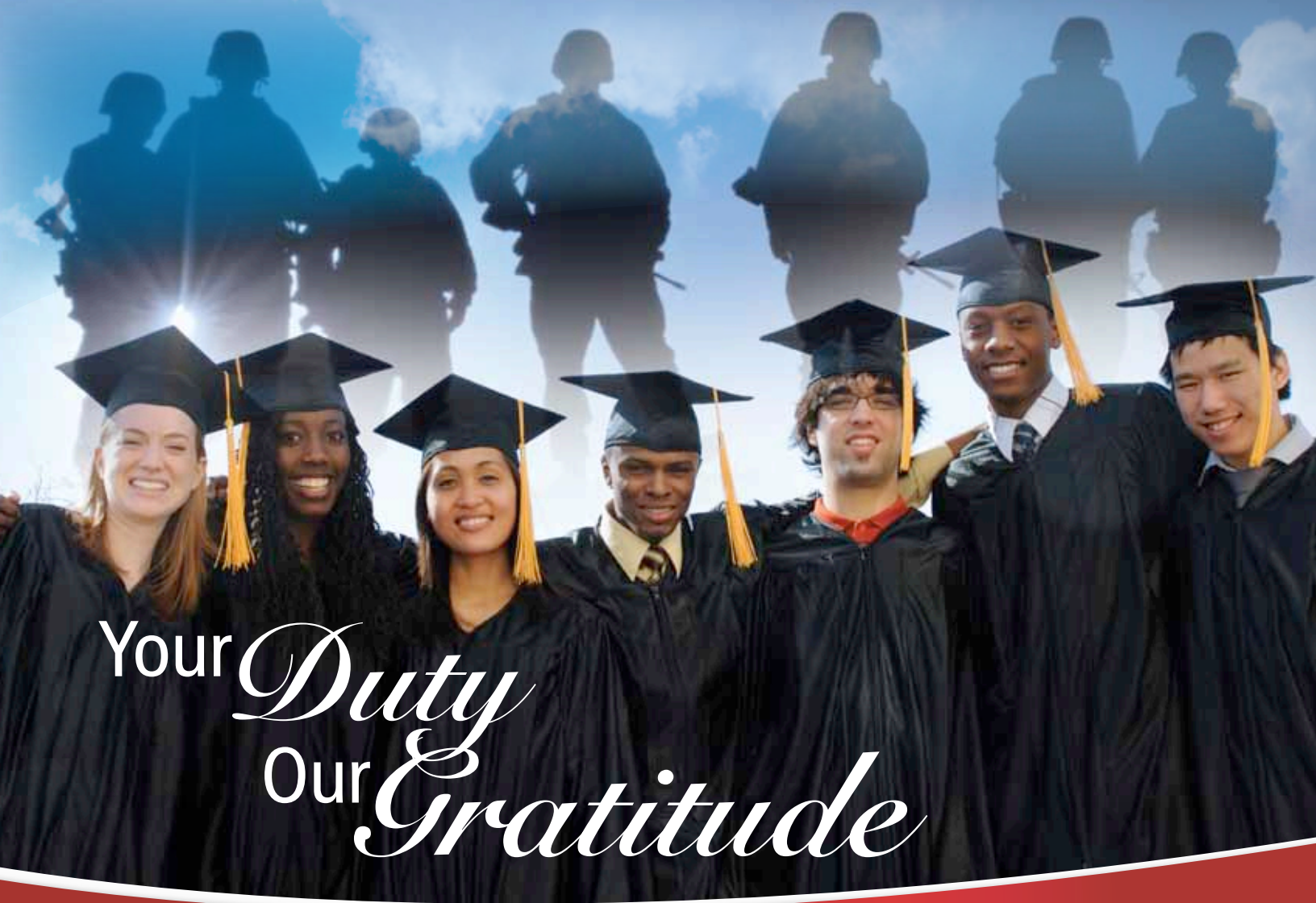
"My casualty assistance officer is an angel," she said. "He has been so incredible from Day 1, and continues to be...a light in the darkness."

Otis said being a CAO is one of the most rewarding experiences of his career.

"You always hope not to have to do this, but it's an honor," he said. "Any case in general would be a privilege because the person gave the ultimate sacrifice, but this has just been really special to me because of how much (Paci) loved her husband, how much he loved them, and the kids are just great."

Being a CAO has also given Otis a fresh view of the Army:

"I've been in 19 years, and I didn't know the full benefits and stuff that the Army provides," he said. "I think the Army has come a long way and really tries to take care of its Families." ♦



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FARM CREATES TRAINING REALISM FOR SOLDIERS, AGRICULTURE TEAMS



Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Brad Staggs



THE goats are being milked, the horse is waiting to be fed and the barn cats are rolling around in the afternoon heat.

A typical day on the farm? Not exactly. It's the Indiana National Guard's Muscatatuck Urban Training Center Farm in Butlerville, Ind.

The farm was started more than a year ago to help train not only troops, but agricultural development teams headed to Iraq and Afghanistan. The farmer, Indiana National Guard Capt. Stephen Spencer, heard about the agricultural training needs and created the farm from, literally, nothing.

"(The) purpose of the farm is to provide livestock for different training venues here at Muscatatuck to make it as real as possible," said Spencer. "A lot of Soldiers, they're not used to animals being around them, and now they can confront them in a training environment so when they are overseas, they are better prepared."

The animals are used in training scenarios that duplicate Middle East environments such as a marketplace or an Afghan farmer's home. Both are places Soldiers and Army civilians might find themselves in while stationed overseas.

Training at Muscatatuck already involves Afghans who portray local nationals; the animals add another layer of authenticity.

Spc. Brandon Stater milks a goat on the farm at the Indiana National Guard's Muscatatuck Urban Training Center.

“We can put the goats and donkeys (in the training venue),” Spencer said. “The donkeys can pull a cart and all of that just adds realism. They’re just stepping into a little piece of Afghanistan versus southern Indiana.”

The animals are well cared for by a team of five Soldiers whose sole job is to work the farm. They are on-call 24/7, 365 days a year.

The Soldiers arrive before sunrise to start their work on the farm and care for the animals, many of which were former family pets donated to the Guard when they became too big to keep indoors. The animals are fed twice a day and let out to graze.

Sergeant Stephen Struewing, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the farm, could not imagine having any other job.

“I love it. It’s the best job I’ve ever had,” Struewing said. “We get out here early and first thing is maintenance, some clean-up and basic farm chores: feeding, cleaning. Then we usually send the animals off, send some out in the field, and watch others as they’re put out to graze.”

The animals, however, are not the only aspect of the Muscatatuck farm, which is quickly becoming self-sufficient and sustaining. Recently, Spencer and his crew mowed a field of hay, gathering enough to keep the farm running until the next season. They have also planted and now care for several gardens, plots of corn, two greenhouses filled with plants, a fruit and nut orchard and a grape arbor. They can also produce soap made from goat’s milk.

The larger aspect of the farm is the overall agricultural development training

done by teams deploying overseas. Agriculture specialists train to assist Afghan farmers in techniques they can use to increase crop production and stimulating their economy. The Muscatatuck farm allows them to practice their trade.

“That’s another (side) of this; the agri-business development teams come here,” Spencer said. “They can actually practice hoof trimming. They can practice giving their vaccinations on our livestock. They can do their evaluations on animals that are military-owned versus civilian-owned.”

They also learn which plants do best in which climates and how to care

for them. They recently added beekeeping and plan to start an aquaculture center featuring tilapia fish farming.

Agriculture teams can come to Muscatatuck and meet all of their training requirements, and the Soldiers don’t mind being its caretakers until the cows come home.

“I just like the physical aspect of it and not being behind a desk in a stuffy office,” Struewing said, gazing at the horizon. “That’s best for me and the people we work with are all outside people, too, so it’s good to be outside.” ♦

Staff Sgt. Brad Staggs writes for MUTC Public Affairs

Capt. Stephen Spencer, an agriculture officer at the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center, Ind., feeds animals on the farm. (Inset) Sgt. Stephen Struewing, noncommissioned officer in charge of the farm at the Indiana National Guard’s Muscatatuck Urban Training Center, displays eggs he collected from the chicken coop.





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Soldiers are exposed to a variety of loud noises. Here, Spc. Gareth Warner drops a 120mm mortar round into the tube while Spc. Ricky Olivo keeps the gun on target during a fire mission on Combat Outpost Zurok in Paktika province, Afghanistan.

SOUND science

World-class Army facility amplifies

Story by Jennifer Downing-Li

A twig cracking, whispers, a car backfiring, shots in the distance: the importance of a Soldier's ability to hear a wide range of sounds is critical to survival and mission success on the battlefield.

In today's military environment, the harshness of various sounds produced by both military and nonmilitary activities can make it difficult for Soldiers to separate useful signals from

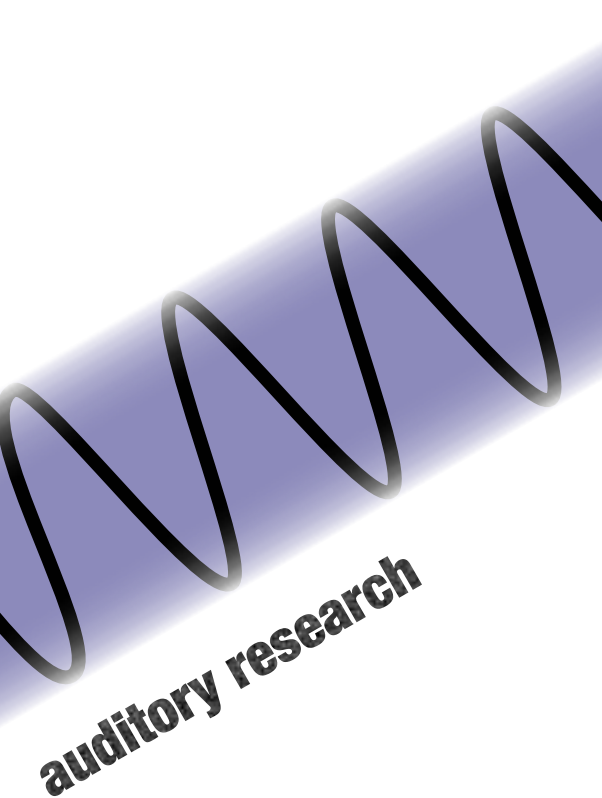
background noise. A Soldier's ability to hear can be corrupted by physical barriers such as ballistics helmets, mission-oriented protective headgear, communications headsets and hearing protection devices.

Mission accomplishment is paramount, so to determine both the limits of human hearing and the effects of Soldier equipment on battlefield sound perception, the U.S. Army Research Laboratory created the Environment for Auditory Research at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. ARL fellow Tom Letowski, and Bruce Amrein, chief of the Visual and Auditory Processes Branch, developed the concept and

blueprint of the EAR.

At the facility, ARL researchers conduct basic and applied auditory and speech perception research to help Soldiers improve situational awareness and increase survivability. Research areas include: the perception of acoustic signatures produced by military-relevant sound sources, speech communication in adverse environments, effects of mental and physical workload on hearing, effects of various types of headgear on detection, and identification and localization of specific acoustic signatures.

To support this research, the EAR facility is capable of replicating sounds from a wide range of indoor and outdoor, urban and rural environments.



“The use of controlled space is imperative in order to integrate certain conditions,” explained Amrein. “For example, sound sources, reflective surfaces and head-mounted equipment must all be emulated in the controlled setting. The capability to mix in relevant military sounds and have an actual body present to give feedback quantifies the effects and impacts of auditory research.”

According to the experts at the facility, the combination of the research spaces and capabilities is unmatched at any military, academic or industrial facility worldwide. The facility currently comprises four indoor areas: the Sphere Room, Distance Hall, Dome Room and Listening Laboratory, as well as one outdoor space, OpenEAR. All spaces are controllable from one room, and the facility can accommodate up to three independent experiments simultaneously.

The Sphere Room was created as an auditory virtual reality space for research in spatial perception, and to evaluate various 3-D system implementations. The room contains 57 loudspeakers in a spherical arrangement and an instrumented listener’s station to collect a variety of responses.

“The current version of the listener’s station allows us to collect a



A participant prepares for an experiment in the Sphere Room. The central location of the listener station and platform allow for the creation of a completely immersive auditory environment.

wide range of overt human responses including speech, direction pointing and screen touching, while future plans include collection of physiological responses,” Amrein noted.

The Dome Room was built for research in auditory localization (identifying the location of a sound or sounds) with a dense array of loudspeakers and can be configured to evaluate perception of sound in a dome-shaped space. The room can hold 180 loudspeakers horizontally and 60 loudspeakers at various heights.

“If a human can differentiate two locations, we can measure it, regardless how closely they are located to each

other,” Amrein explained.

The Distance Hall was created for research in distance estimation and sound depth perception. It is shaped like an elongated rectangular box, and is capable of projecting sound from the 180 loudspeakers (which can be placed at almost any point) in the space.

“Humans are very poor in reporting auditory distances, and there was almost no research done on human sensitivity to changes in auditory distance,” said Letowski. “It is important for the Soldier to determine if two gun shots...came from the same location or from two different locations.”

The Listening Lab was designed for



A researcher configures an experiment in the Control Room. Rack-mounted equipment is used to control the stimulus presentations in the research space at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.'s Army Research Laboratory.

research in speech perception and can evaluate speech traffic from up to 10 talkers located in various locations, as well as adjust acoustic properties.

"One of our design guidelines in creating EAR was to make its sound reproduction capabilities compatible with those used in major Army simulations developed by the Institute for Creative Technologies," said Amrein. "The Listening Laboratory was created to meet this requirement."

Lastly, the OpenEAR was designed for auditory research in real outdoor environments.

"The presence of the OpenEAR in the EAR structure is really the most important element of the EAR," said Letowski. "There is no other place where basic data collection under stringent and fully controllable listening conditions can be done together with real-world field data collection, using the same people and equipment, and be done at almost the same time."

The EAR facility's uniqueness lies

in the amount and extent of studies that can be conducted involving auditory distance and depth perception, as well as studies focused on the identification of acoustic signatures of personal weapons; effects of mental load; sound familiarity; and sound expectancy on sound detection and response time.

Two of the first completed experiments involved localizing a target sound from a distance and estimating the direction of footsteps. In the future, researchers plan to examine the effects of various types of helmets. ARL researchers are also collaborating with several external organizations such as the Missouri University of Science and Technology and Starkey Laboratories.

"There are still more things that we would like to add to EAR, but it is time now to demonstrate its usefulness," said Letowski. ♦

Jennifer Downing-Li works for Army Research Lab Public Affairs.

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AROUND



(Above) Pfc. Robert Parker (center) provides fire support for his squad during a live-fire exercise at the Kirkush Military Training Base in Diyala province, Iraq. During the summer exercise, U.S. and Iraqi forces trained to clear mine-wired obstacles and bunker complexes, as well as how to react to contact. Parker is assigned to Company A, 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. (Photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Ted Green)



Soldiers from Company C, 67th Signal Battalion, stationed at Fort Gordon, Ga., board a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft at Sather Air Base, Iraq, July 10. The Soldiers redeployed to their home unit as part of the troop drawdown in Iraq. (Photo by Air Force Senior Airman Perry Aston)

THE ARMY



(Bottom photo) Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mark Davis (left) and Chief Warrant Officer 3 Mike Croslin discuss their last mission after landing an AH-64 Apache helicopter from Company B, 1st Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, Attack Reconnaissance Battalion in Kunduz, Afghanistan, July 24. The Apache landed to refuel after a firefight with insurgents. (Photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Walter M. Wayman)

(Below) Spc. Jarrod Holler of the 101st Airborne Division, Fort Campbell, Ky., helps Boy Scout Ross Atherton complete the Climbing Merit Badge at the 2010 National Boy Scout Jamboree at Fort AP Hill, Va. Holler is part of Joint Task Force National Scout Jamboree supporting the Jamboree through military exhibits, history, activities and units. (Photo by David Burke)



Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander of the International Security Assistance Force, speaks with an Afghan National Police officer during a tour of the ANP's Regional Training Center in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Petraeus visited the center along with NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Bradley Lail)



Sgt. Robert Huff and Cpl. Patrick O'Rourke with the Military Police Platoon, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Special Troops Battalion, Task Force Spartan, rescue an Afghan child from flood waters in the Nari Shahi village in the Beshood District of eastern Afghanistan's Nangarhar province in July. (Photo courtesy of Combined Joint Task Force 101)

AROUND THE



(Left) A Soldier rappels down a wall during day seven of Air Assault School on Camp Smith, N.Y., July 27. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Rodrick J. Jackson)



(Above) Soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division's 1st Battalion, 237th Infantry Regiment, advance through the town of Barge Matal as part of Operation Azmaray Fury, Kunar province, Afghanistan, July 28. (Photo by Spc. Anthony Jackson)



(Right) Sgt. Ardicio Galvao examines the eye of a kitten up for adoption at the Veterinary Treatment Facility on Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The clinic treats pets belonging to troops and Department of Defense employees who work with Joint Task Force Guantanamo and U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay. (Photo by Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Joshua R. Nistas)



THE ARMY



(Left) Pfc. Aaron R. Will, a gunner with 2nd Platoon, Company C, 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, Task Force Bulldog, grabs more ammunition for his automatic grenade launcher during an insurgent attack against his unit's convoy near the village of Tarale in eastern Afghanistan's Kunar province, July 15. No International Security Assistance Forces were injured. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Gary A. Witte)

(Right/inset) Soldiers and community volunteers install roof trusses for the future home of the Flohr-Behrens family for Habitat for Humanity in Brainerd, Minn. The Soldiers are assigned to the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade. (Photo by Sgt. Nicholas Olson)

(Below) Staff Sgt. Pamela Hyer, a combat medic attached to the 865th Combat Support Hospital, plays with the local children at the U.S. Army South New Horizons-Haiti 2010 Mandrin engineering site in July. Servicemembers, in partnership with the government of Haiti, are conducting various medical, dental and engineering missions for the locals in the Gonaives area. (Photo by Spc. Jessica Lopez)



(Above) The mortar section, attached to Company D, 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, Task Force Bulldog, fires to protect Combat Outpost Michigan in Afghanistan's Pech Valley as it comes under enemy attack, July 11. The section ran almost 1,000 fire missions from late May to mid-July, according to their records. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Gary A. Witte)

(Left) Soldiers from 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, paddle their Zodiac watercraft 3.5 miles in Cow House Creek, Texas, during a physical training challenge, lead by Command Sgt. Maj. James Pippin, July 30. (Photo by Spc. Sharla Lewis)



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MSG Scott Ford and SSG John Walding

On the morning of April 6, 2008, Master Sgt. Scott Ford, Staff Sgt. John Walding and an assault team of Green Berets landed at the base of the fortress-like Shok Valley village in Afghanistan. They were expecting to face 15 to 20 enemies, but what they encountered was a

fierce ambush by hundreds of Taliban fighters. The team called in an astounding 70 danger-close airstrikes during the 6.5-hour battle. Ford and Scott, though wounded themselves, refused to accept defeat and earned Silver Stars for their sheer will, initiative and heroism.

The Nation's strength starts here.

SEASONS CHANGE,
SAFETY ALWAYS



*Soldiers, Civilians and Family members
prepare for cold weather activities through
awareness, education and information.
Gear up and protect yourself and our
Band of Brothers and Sisters.*

OCTOBER 2010-MARCH 2011



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